

I wanted to forward for your review an op-ed I wrote on energy prices that was recently [published](#) in the

Redding Record Searchlight

. You can read it below.

"We're making new investments in the development of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel that's actually made from a plantlike substance, algae — you've got a bunch of algae out here. If we can figure out how to make energy out of that, we'll be doing all right." — President Barack Obama at the University of Miami.

The president's energy policy seems to be this: elevate and fund with taxpayer dollars experimental, intermittent, unreliable and expensive sources of energy while hampering, hindering, regulating and minimizing proven sources of reliable energy — especially petroleum. No wonder we keep seeing wide price swings at the pump.

Gas prices have been falling in recent weeks, but history has repeatedly shown us that prices can rapidly spike. The price of a barrel of oil can be swiftly impacted by war in the Middle East, political unrest, supply manipulation by foreign oil-producing states, hurricanes, increased demand in other nations, and many other factors. President Obama often complains that circumstances beyond his control dictate the price of oil. But what about the circumstances within his control?

President Obama's own State Department made an official finding that the Keystone XL pipeline would pose no significant environmental threat. Nevertheless, he has rejected TransCanada's permit application to construct a 1,700-mile pipeline from Canada to Texas refineries. His decision to kill the project not only perpetuates our dependence on foreign oil, but it squashes an opportunity for tens of thousands of workers to obtain high-wage jobs building the pipeline. I am deeply frustrated that President Obama has taken a win-win and turned it into a lose-lose. I remain concerned that President Obama chose as his energy secretary a man named Steven Chu, who stated in 2008, "Somehow we have to figure out how to boost the price of gasoline to the levels in Europe." I do not see how America would be helped by \$9 per gallon gas.

When President Obama talks about energy independence, he often emphasizes a desire for experimental, expensive and unreliable energy. He has discussed the prospect of creating "biofuels" out of algae (essentially, pond scum). While it is possible to create energy from algae, it is not a replacement for a rational energy policy for a huge nation. It is a talking point that generates enthusiasm from the environmental voting bloc. The same goes for solar projects like SoyIndra, a spectacular failure that is going to cost the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

Where the president has faltered, Congress has taken the lead. The House has passed legislation to approve the Keystone XL pipeline, and last week the House passed a series of bills under the umbrella of HR 4480, "The Domestic Energy and Jobs Act." This legislation would open up new areas for domestic drilling, streamline environmental regulations and permitting processes, and potentially put tens or even hundreds of thousands of people to work. We hope the president will support this bipartisan effort.